The Resurgence of Ideology in Indonesia: Political Islam, Aliran and Political Behaviour

Fossati, Diego

Veröffentlichungsversion / Published Version
Zeitschriftenartikel / journal article

Empfohlene Zitierung / Suggested Citation:
Fossati, D. (2019). The Resurgence of Ideology in Indonesia: Political Islam, Aliran and Political Behaviour. *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs*, *38*(2), 119-148. https://doi.org/10.1177/1868103419868400

Research article

GIGA | Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs

The Resurgence of Ideology in Indonesia: Political Islam, *Aliran* and Political Behaviour

Journal of Current
Southeast Asian Affairs
2019, Vol. 38(2) 119–148

DOI: 10.1177/1868103419868400
journals.sagepub.com/home/saa
SAGE

Diego Fossati

Abstract

The 2019 Indonesian presidential elections indicate that ideology played an important role in voting behaviour, as aggregate subnational results seem to mirror the mid-1950s, when Indonesian politics was organised around ideological and partisan groups known as *aliran*. However, the extent to which these macro-level patterns are rooted in real ideological divisions among Indonesian voters is an open question. This article analyses an original survey specifically designed to measure *aliran* identities, ideological orientations and political preferences of ordinary Indonesians. Findings indicate that *aliran* identities are still present and associated with party choice but only loosely connected with political ideology. Most notably, however, political Islam is associated with important political attitudes and behaviours. Islamist Indonesians are less likely to support liberal understandings of democracy, more likely to see economic issues as policy priorities and more likely to support economic redistribution and regional autonomy. This suggests that ideology should receive greater attention in the study of Indonesian politics.

Keywords

Indonesia, democratisation, Islam, voting behaviour, ideology, public opinion

Department of Asian and International studies, City University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, China

Corresponding author:
Diego Fossati, Department of Asian and International studies, City University of Hong Kong, 83 Tat Chee Avenue, Kowloon Tong, Hong Kong, China.
Email: dfossati@cityu.edu.hk

1. Introduction

Indonesia recently held one of the largest elections in the world. On 17 April 2019, an estimated 81 per cent of about 193 million eligible voters cast their ballot to elect the president of the republic and representatives at various levels of government, including the National Assembly or *Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat* (DPR). For the fifth consecutive electoral cycle since democratisation in the late 1990s, elections unfolded peacefully in this large and diverse country with a history of ethnic and religious tensions. Incumbent Joko Widodo, known as Jokowi, will serve a second term as president, while preliminary results for the legislative elections indicate substantial continuity with the 2014 election results.

In some respects, these results were no surprise to observers of Indonesian politics. The incumbent president had long led public opinion polls with double-digit margins over his opponent Prabowo Subianto, and support for himself and his party coalition appears largely unchanged since the beginning of the electoral campaign and indeed since the 2014 elections.

From a different perspective, however, these results point to the consolidation of two ideological coalitions, a remarkable and novel development for a country in which politics is often described as being driven largely by clientelistic linkages between citizens and politicians. While the Jokowi camp prevailed in Central and Eastern Java, as well as in Bali and some islands in Eastern Indonesia, Prabowo prevailed in Sumatra, most of Sulawesi and West Java. As noted by Aspinall (2019), it is easy to identify historical continuities in such patterns of spatial variation, as they are rooted in an ideological dimension that has long featured in Indonesian politics, namely a cleavage about the role of Islam in politics. The coalition supporting the incumbent president draws from areas traditionally associated with secularism and a more moderate form of Islam, while his opponent taps into region with a more Islamist political culture.

Results from the presidential elections thus point to a resurgence of historical political–partisan identities, which are known in the context of Indonesian politics as *aliran*, or "streams" of political culture and ideology. One implication of this new development for analysts of Indonesian politics is that partisanship and political ideology deserve more attention than they have so far received, since their role as drivers of attitudes and political behaviour may be more consequential than commonly assumed.

This article aims to do just that. I focus on the individual-level dimensions of *aliran* identity, ideology, and partisanship and ask a series of interrelated questions: Do ordinary Indonesian really see themselves as divided into various *aliran*, as suggested by the presidential election results? Are these groups actually associated with partisan or candidate preferences? And are they still characterised by distinct ideological positions, as they were in the heyday of *aliran* politics? In asking these questions, and in providing some answers based on the analysis of an original survey specifically designed to study political ideology in Indonesia, I hope to contribute to the scholarly debate by exploring whether, and to what extent, political–ideological identities matter to ordinary Indonesians.

The article starts by summarising existing research on the role of ideological competition in Indonesian politics. I then outline the research design and discuss some data on *aliran* identity and political ideology (which is defined as preferences over the role of Islam in politics) as emerging from survey responses. The two following sections explore empirical associations between *aliran* identity, political ideology, and a host of attitudinal and behavioural factors, such as policy preferences and political choices. The conclusive section discusses the implications of the findings for research on Indonesian politics.

2. Debating the Role of Ideology in Indonesian Politics

Anthropologist Clifford Geertz famously divided Javanese society into three sociocultural groups, namely the *abangan*, nominal Muslims who practice a syncretic version of Islam with strong Hindu–Buddhist influences; the *santri*, who adhere to a more orthodox, ideological form of Islam; and the *priyayi*, Javanese people of high socioeconomic status who occupied elite positions in the state bureaucracy (Geertz, 1960).[1] The relevance of this typology for political science is that these three "streams," or *aliran* in Bahasa Indonesia, were associated with political behaviour and social organisation in the early years of the Indonesian state.

During the Old Order, when Indonesian politics was dominated by the figure of President Sukarno, Indonesian political parties were divided into two main camps. On one hand, secularist parties such as the Indonesian Nationalist Party (PNI), the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI), and the Indonesian Socialist Party (PSI) drew most of their support from *abangan* Indonesians. On the other hand, *santri* Indonesians split between two forms of political Islam, namely the "traditionalist" Islam propagated especially in rural Java by the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), a religious organisation that also acted as a political party in the 1950s, and the "modernist" Islam more common in cities and regions outside Java, which was represented by the Muhammadiyah (another religious organisation) and the Masyumi Party.

This framework was initially formulated with exclusive reference to the Island of Java, and it applies only loosely, if at all, to other Indonesian regions. However, it quickly developed as the dominant paradigm to study political and partisan affiliations in Indonesia. While the massacres of 1965–1966 brought *aliran* politics to an abrupt end, these cultural–political identities survived three decades of authoritarianism. As King (2003) famously showed by comparing historical electoral returns from the mid-1950s with the 1999 election results, *aliran* affiliations played an important role in the first democratic elections after the breakdown of the New Order regime.

Today, however, ideology is often believed to have lost much of its relevance in structuring electoral competition in Indonesia. Contemporary research suggests that a process of "dealignment" from *aliran* affiliations has been developing in democratic Indonesia (Ufen, 2008) and that factors such as support for political leaders, evaluations of government performance, and patronage are more powerful drivers of voting behaviour than *aliran* identities or ideology (Aspinall and Berenschot, 2019; Mujani and Liddle, 2010). Furthermore, scholars focusing on political elites have often emphasised

that collusive, rather than competitive behaviour often dominates inter-party relations (Ambardi, 2008; Slater, 2004). In short, the prevailing view in scholarly research on the subject only allows for a marginal role for ideological competition in Indonesian politics.

This model appears to be increasingly incomplete to account for the complexity of contemporary Indonesian politics, especially in the light of developments that have unfolded over the last few years. For one, political parties have maintained distinct positions in their views of state–Islam relations, the key dimension that has driven ideological competition in Indonesian politics since decolonisation (Mietzner, 2013). A recent survey of Indonesian politicians suggests that, while Indonesian parties propose similar economic policies, their positions on political Islam are clearly differentiated (Aspinall et al., 2018). Second, recent research has shown that *aliran*-based partisan affiliations, while weakened, are still a significant driver of voting behaviour for a large segment of the Indonesian electorate (Fossati, 2019). Third, work on voting behaviour resonates with these findings, suggesting that Indonesians are more polarised than commonly assumed on certain policy issues (Fossati et al., 2019). Finally, recent developments such as the mass demonstration ahead of the Jakarta gubernatorial elections, the increasing clout of formerly marginal hard-line Islamic groups and the results of the 2019 presidential elections mentioned in the introduction suggest that debates over Islam and politics are still defining Indonesian politics (Mietzner and Muhtadi, 2018). The implications of these new developments are clear: ideology, partisanship, and policy should no longer be residual categories in the study of Indonesian politics.

To what extent, then, do ideology and *aliran* affiliations still influence the political attitudes and behaviour of ordinary Indonesians? In a recent volume, Pepinsky et al. (2018) analyze the link between religious piety and public opinion among Indonesian Muslims, offering survey and experimental evidence that religious beliefs may influence political behaviour. I build on this work by analysing a more recent survey that includes respondents of various religious backgrounds and by focussing more explicitly on political ideology rather than religiosity. I measure political ideology with a novel, composite index that taps into various aspects of attitudes about state–Islam relations, and I analyse the full spectrum of the empirical correlates of this measure with *aliran* identities and various attitudinal orientations.

3. Research Design and Data

This article draws from a survey conducted by Lembaga Survei Indonesia and commissioned by ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute as the Indonesia National Survey Project (Fossati et al., 2017). Data collection took place in May 2017 with face-to-face interviews on a randomly selected sample of 1,620 Indonesian citizens. The sampling procedure, as in Pepinsky et al. (2018), follows a multi-stage stratified random sampling method with villages as the primary sampling unit. Villages, or their urban equivalent (*kelurahan*), are the smallest administrative unit in Indonesia, and they were randomly selected in each province based on the province's proportion of the general population.[2] For each of the 162 selected villages, five neighbourhoods were randomly selected, then two households per neighbourhood, and one person per household. As a result, ten

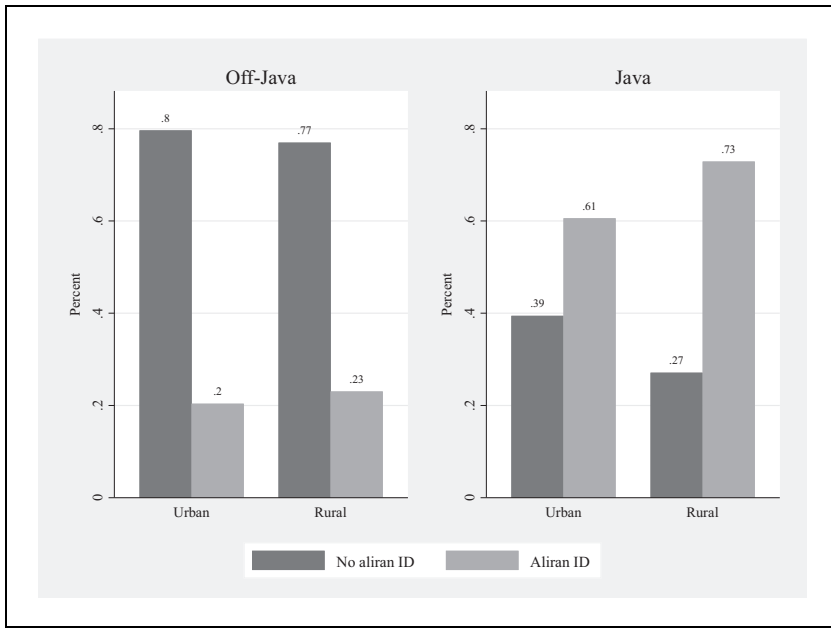

Figure 1. *Aliran* Identification by Region.

respondents were selected for each village, and the resulting sample of 1,620 was highly representative of the Indonesian population in terms of sociodemographic characteristics such as age, gender, religion, ethnicity, and region (urban/rural).

The remainder of this section introduces the data collected by this survey, focussing on the two key variables of interest, namely *aliran* identity and political ideology.

3.1. Aliran *Identities in the Indonesian Electorate*

To investigate whether, and to what extent, *aliran* identities still resonate among Indonesians, the survey asks the following question:

> *Some Indonesians think of themselves as belonging to certain cultural groups, or aliran. Among these groups/aliran, which group do you feel close to?*

Overall, the data indicate that *aliran* identities are still rooted in the Indonesian electorate, as 47 per cent of respondents report identifying with one *aliran* identity, while the remaining 53 per cent do not. More precisely, 14 per cent identify as *abangan*, 30 per cent as *santri*, and 3 per cent as *priyayi*. However, *aliran* identification varies dramatically by region. While two-thirds, or 66 per cent of respondents in Java, identify as belonging to one of the three *aliran* streams, *aliran* identification drops to only 22 per cent in respondents located in other islands. This suggests that *aliran* identities are much

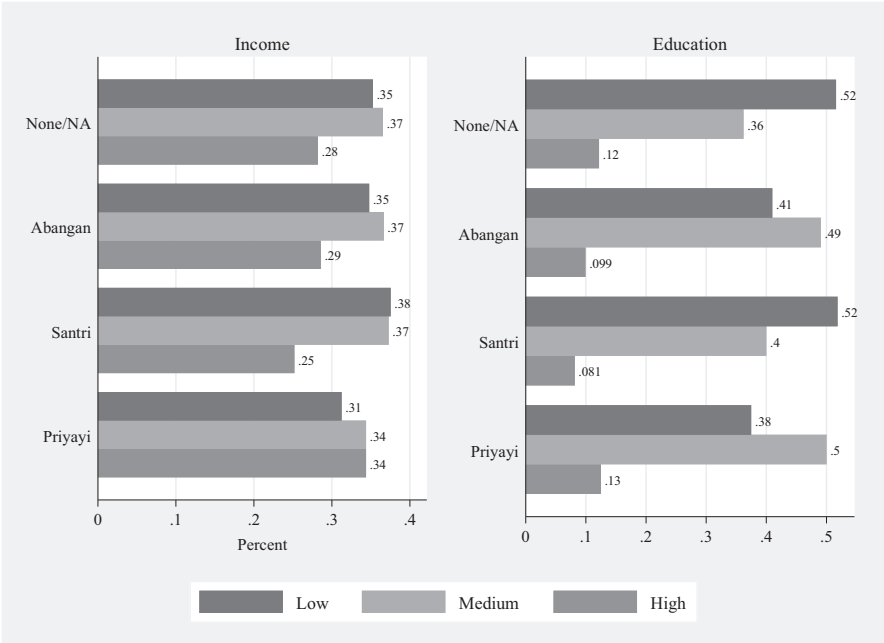

Figure 2. *Aliran*, Income and Education.

more established in Java than elsewhere, as suggested by the historical and anthropological literature.

Figure 1 displays the difference across Java and the rest of the archipelago, further disaggregating the data between urban and rural regions. Outside Java, *aliran* identification is low both among urbanites and rural dwellers. However, in Java, respondents in rural areas are substantially more likely to identify with *aliran* streams than people living in cities (73 per cent and 61 per cent, respectively), which suggests that *aliran* affiliations in Java are stronger in rural areas than in cities. Given the low number of respondents identifying with *aliran* outside Java and the theoretical issues in extending the concept of *aliran* to non-Javanese societies, the remainder of section 3.1. and section 4 focus exclusively on respondents in Javanese provinces.[3]

As for other sociodemographic factors, some additional differences emerge across *aliran* groups. *Priyayi* are more likely (63 per cent) to report living in cities than *abangan* (55 per cent) and *santri* (52 per cent), which suggests that the social base for this *aliran* group is more urban than for the other two. In terms of religious composition, variation across the three *aliran* is not substantial, as their members are all overwhelmingly Muslim (94 per cent of *abangan*, 100 per cent of *santri*, and 91 per cent of *priyayi*), like Javanese society more generally. However, the ethnic background of *aliran* members

Table 1. Support for Secularism and Islamism.

Item		Agree	Neutral	Disagree
1	The government should prioritise Islam over other religions	49	18	33
2	Islamic religious leaders should play a very important role in politics	37	25	38
3	Indonesian regions should be allowed to implement Sharia law at the local level	41	22	37
4	Sharia law should be implemented throughout Indonesia	39	20	41
5	Blasphemy against Islam should be punished more severely	63	21	16
6	When voting in elections, it is very important to choose a Muslim leader	58	20	22
7	Islam should become Indonesia's only official religion	36	20	44
	Average	46	21	33

varies across group. While *abangan* and *santri* are predominantly Javanese (65 per cent and 62 per cent, respectively), only 47 per cent of *priyayi* respondents are, the second largest ethnic group being the Sundanese (28 per cent).

Furthermore, as shown in Figure 2, *aliran* groups display some distinctive features in their income and education profiles. For income, *priyayi* appear to be overall better off than the other two groups, followed by the *abangan* and the *santri*. As for education, while *abangan* and *priyayi* present a fairly similar profile, *santri* respondents appear as substantially more poorly educated. While 38 per cent of *priyayi* and 41 per cent of *abangan* respondents can be classified as being "low education" (i.e. they did not graduate from secondary school), the percentage raises significantly to 52 per cent in self-identified *santri*, the same figure as for respondents who do not identify with any *aliran* group. In general, the data thus suggest that *santri* Indonesians may be characterised as having a lower socio-economic status than the other two *aliran* groups, especially when compared with the *priyayi*.

3.2. Measuring Political Islam

As mentioned above, the key ideological dimension in Indonesian politics, as in other Muslim-majority Asian countries (Iqtidar, 2011; Liow, 2009; Riaz and Fair, 2010), concerns the role of Islam in public affairs. This article therefore understands "political Islam" as an ideological dimension regarding the role of Islam in politics that varies across individuals. At one end of the spectrum, secularist Indonesians favour a clear demarcation between Islam and the state. While these individuals may not necessarily be opposed to religious values playing some role in public life, they do not see Islam, or any other religion, as deserving of a special status in state–religion relations. In this respect, secularist Indonesians may also be described as "pluralist." At the opposite end of the ideological spectrum, Islamist Indonesians believe that Islam should have a privileged position in public life vis-à-vis all other religions, a principle that may have broad and consequential ramifications in various policy domains. Between these two extremes,

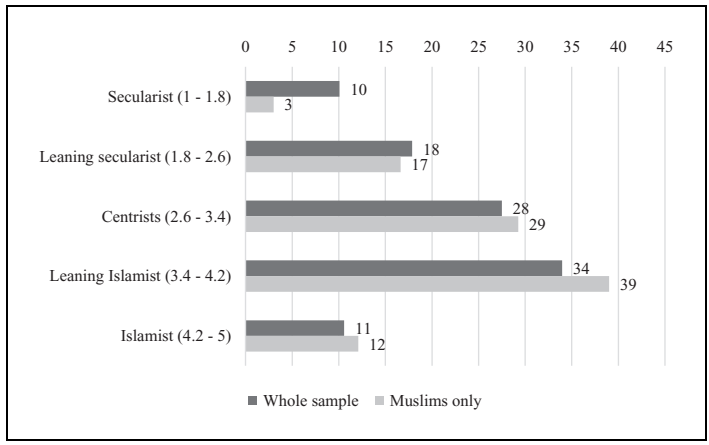

Figure 3. Ideology Groups in the Indonesian Electorate.

individual-level positions vary as to whether Islam should play a more or less prominent role in Indonesian public affairs.[4]

The survey instrument includes a scale with a series of statements tapping into different aspects of the ideological divide between secularism and Islamism and asks respondents to evaluate them using a five-point scale in which lower values correspond to lower levels of agreement (1 = *strongly disagree*; 2 = *disagree*; 3 = *neither agree nor disagree*; 4 = *agree*; 5 = *strongly agree*). Table 1 reports the seven items included in the questionnaire with the share of respondents who agree and disagree with them.[5] Some of these items refer to issues that are common to all Muslim-majority countries. For instance, the first question asks whether respondents agree that the government should prioritise Islam over other religions, and two statements elicit views on implementing Islamic law. Others, such as items 5 and 6, are more specific to the Indonesian context, as they were inspired by recent debates that unfolded over the gubernatorial election in Jakarta.[6]

The figures in Table 1 indicate that Indonesians are divided on the key issue of the role of Islam in political life, but they also show a preponderance of support for a larger role for Islam in politics over more secularist understandings of state–Islam relations. On average, 46 per cent percent of the population support the items in the scale, while only one-third disagrees with them. For most statements, the number of respondents who agree is larger than those who disagree, and the margins become wider if we only consider Muslim respondents. Table 1, however, also shows substantial variation across the seven items. For the most radical of them, such as the item stating that Islam should become the only official religion in Indonesia (item 7), opposition may be stronger than support. Others, such as the idea that voting for candidates of religious minorities should be avoided (item 6), support is much more widespread.

By calculating a simple average across the seven items reported in Table 1, we can further build a composite index, which can be called the Political Islam Index (PII), that offers an exhaustive measure of policy positions over the role of Islam in politics. The PII ranges from 1 to 5, attributing lower values to respondents more supportive of secularism and higher values to individuals supporting a larger role for Islam in Indonesian political life. When respondents are divided into five groups according to their score in this composite index, as in Figure 3, we can gauge the distribution of support for secularism and Islamism in the Indonesian electorate.[7]

At the two opposite ends of the PII spectrum, we find groups of fairly equivalent size that represent the two ideological "extremes" of secularist and Islamist Indonesians. In between, about 28 per cent of the respondents may be described as "centrist," 18 per cent as "leaning secularist," and a substantially larger group constituting more than one-third of the population as "leaning Islamist." This distribution again suggests that, while there is substantial heterogeneity in views about state–Islam relations, respondents who favour a larger role for Islam in politics outnumber respondents of more secularist/pluralist leanings. This skewedness is more pronounced if we only consider Muslim respondents, for which only 3 per cent of respondents can be categorised as secularist, while 12 per cent qualify as Islamist according to the thresholds used to generate the groups in Figure 3.[8]

Overall, the picture emerging from these data is thus one of a fairly conservative electorate in which uncompromisingly secularist attitudes are held only by Indonesians belonging to religious minorities and a very small share of progressive Indonesian Muslims. The median value of the PII for a Muslim respondent in the sample is 3.43 on a scale that ranges from 1 to 5, which suggests that a majority of Muslim respondent is comfortable with the idea that Islam should occupy a position of *primus inter pares* among the religions practiced in Indonesia. Survey data do not allow us to speculate about the specific form that such a supremacy would take in the view of respondents. However, these numbers suggest that support for pluralism, for many Indonesian Muslims, may be conditional to some form of acknowledgement of Islam as having a privileged status in Indonesian law and public policy. This finding is consistent with the view that the state–religion relations in Indonesia, while characterised by tolerance towards religious minorities, differ from a Western secularist ideal-type based on individual rights and a clear separation between the religion and the state (Menchik, 2016).

4. *Aliran*: Still a Useful Concept?

The first factor I focus on is the role of *aliran* identities in orienting political behaviour. I start by exploring whether *aliran* affiliations are associated with political interest and knowledge, and I then turn to partisanship and ideology.

4.1. Political Interest and Knowledge

A crucial question is whether *aliran* streams are associated with specific patterns of attitudes and voting behaviour, as they were in the early 1950s. A first hypothesis is that

Table 2. Political Knowledge among *Aliran* Groups.

Question	% Correct answers				
	No aliran	Aliran	Abangan	Santri	Priyayi
1. Name the vice president of Indonesia	71	76	83	73	91
2. Which political party has the largest number of seats in the DPR?	42	47	57	43	56
3. Who is Sri Mulyani Indrawati?	44	47	55	44	53
4. How long is the office term for a local leader (governor, bupati, mayor)?	72	79	81	77	88
Average number of correct answers	2.29	2.49	2.75	2.36	2.88

Note: DPR: Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat.

Indonesians identifying with an *aliran* stream may be more interested in politics than the rest of the electorate. The fact that these voters identify with a specific cultural–political tradition might be related to overall higher levels of interest in political and ideological issues, which in turn has implications for political participation and political knowledge. The data set I analyse includes various questions on political interest and participation that allow us to explore this relationship. Overall, and with little variation across *aliran* group, voters reporting *aliran* affiliations appear to be more engaged with politics than "non-*aliran*" voters, as 29 per cent of them report interest in politics as opposed to only 23 per cent among those who do not identify with any *aliran* stream.

As for participation, the differences across these two groups are more nuanced. On the one hand, voters reporting an *aliran* affiliation do not appear to be any more likely to participate in elections than those who do not. While 90 per cent of non-*aliran* voters report always voting at the last presidential, legislative, and local elections, "only" 87 per cent of voters identifying with an *aliran* do.[9] On the other hand, however, voters with *aliran* affiliations are indeed more likely to engage in non-electoral participation through activities such as contacting a politician, donating money to a campaign/party, volunteering for political campaigns, participating to political rallies, joining demonstrations, and using social media to talk about politics. About 20 per cent of voters identifying with an *aliran* report engaging in at least one of these activities over the last three years, while the share drops to 16 per cent among non-*aliran* voters. Overall, the picture of emerging from these data is thus that political interest and participation are higher among voters identifying with *aliran*, although the differences are not extreme.

Political interest should be strongly correlated with political knowledge. As voters with higher interest in politics are more likely to spend time and effort at acquiring information about political issues, they are likely to be more sophisticated in their knowledge about and understanding of politics. In this survey, I measure political knowledge by asking the four questions about Indonesian politics reported in Table 2 and by counting how many of them are answered correctly. On average, survey respondents

Table 3. Three Party Families, Past and Present.

	Secularist	Traditional Islamic	Modernist Islamic
1950s	Indonesian Nationalist Party (PNI); Indonesian Communist Party (PKI); Indonesian Socialist Party (PSI)	Nahdlatul Ulama (NU)	Masyumi
Today	PDI-P (Indonesian Democratic Party-Struggle)	PKB (National Awakening Party); PPP (United Development Party)	PAN (National Mandate Party); PKS (Prosperous Justice Party); PBB (Crescent Star Party); PPP (United Development Party)

answer correctly between two and three of the four questions, and the differences across *aliran* groups, as shown in Table 2, are substantial.

Abangan and *priyayi* respondents are by far the most politically sophisticated groups, scoring an average number of correct answers of 2.75 and 2.88, respectively. For instance, they are the only groups in which a majority of respondents is able to identify the PDI-P (Indonesian Democratic Party-Struggle) as the largest party in the Indonesian parliament and Sri Mulyani as the Minister of the Economy. *Santri* respondents, in contrast, while slightly better informed than voters who do not report any *aliran* affiliation, are substantially less successful in answering the four questions than their *abangan* and *priyayi* counterparts. Most notably, 27 per cent of *santri* respondents were not even able to name Jusuf Kalla as the Vice President of Indonesia, as opposed to only 17 per cent of the *abangan* and 9 per cent of the *priyayi*.

These findings suggest two considerations. First, and consistently with the figures on political interest and participation, voters who report *aliran* affiliations tend to be, as a whole, slightly better informed about politics than those who do not. Second, however, and most importantly, there are stark differences across the three *aliran* groups, as the *santri* appear to be substantially less politically sophisticated than *abangan* and *priyayi* respondents. It is important to note that this variation does not originate in different levels of political interest, which are virtually identical across the three groups. More plausibly, the differences in educational background identified in Figure 2 may be playing an important role in determining the distinctively low levels of political knowledge among the *santri*.

4.2. Partisanship

In contemporary Indonesian politics, although the ideological profile of Indonesian political parties is less clear-cut than in the past, it is still possible to identify differences (Mietzner, 2013: 167–191). At one end of the spectrum, the PDI-P continues Sukarno's ideological tradition in prioritising nationalism over religion. At the

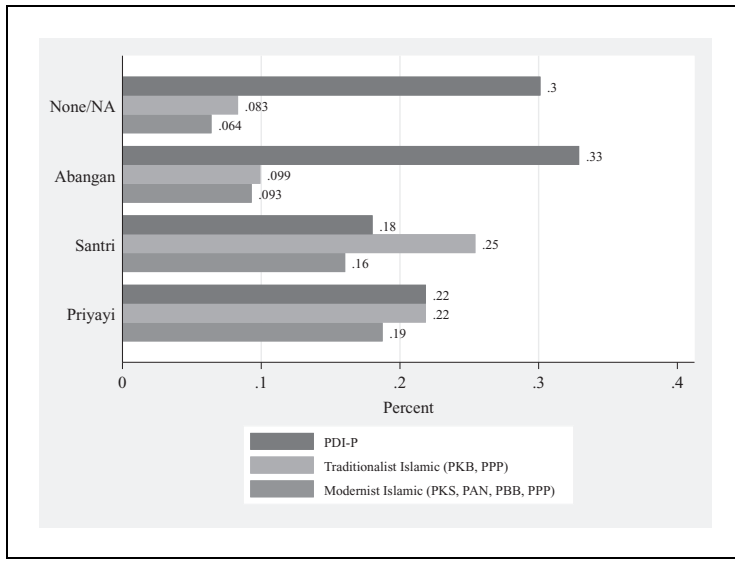

Figure 4. Party Support by *Aliran* Group.

opposite end, several parties compete for the Islamic legacy, with the PKB (National Awakening Party) maintaining close ties to NU's traditionalism, parties such as PKS (Prosperous Justice Party), PAN (National Mandate Party), and PBB (Crescent Star Party) typically being described as modernist, and the PPP (United Development Party) trying to appeal to both constituencies. According to this classification, Indonesian past and contemporary political parties can be grouped into the three party "blocs" or "families," as shown in Table 3.

By leveraging on the survey question asking respondents what party they would vote for if elections were held today, we can investigate the empirical relationship between *aliran* identities and party choice. Given the historical association described above between *abangan* culture and secularism, the expectation is that Indonesian voters today should be more likely to report a preference for the PDI-P when they self-identify as *abangan*. Conversely, *santri* voters should be more likely to report an intention to vote for Islamic parties, be they traditionalist or modernist. Figure 4 shows data that corroborate these expectations. Support for the PDI-P indeed varies dramatically across the two groups, dropping from 33 per cent in *abangan* to 18 per cent in *santri* respondents. By contrast, the *santri* are much more likely than the *abangan* to vote for traditionalist Islamic parties (25 per cent vs. 10 per cent) and modernist Islamic parties (16 per cent vs. 9 per cent). *Priyayi* respondents also appear to be substantially more likely to vote for Islamic parties of any kind than *abangan* voters and more likely to support modernist Islamic parties than any other *aliran* group.

If we compare the respondents in each of these two groups with those who did not report any *aliran* affiliation, however, a different picture emerges. The partisan

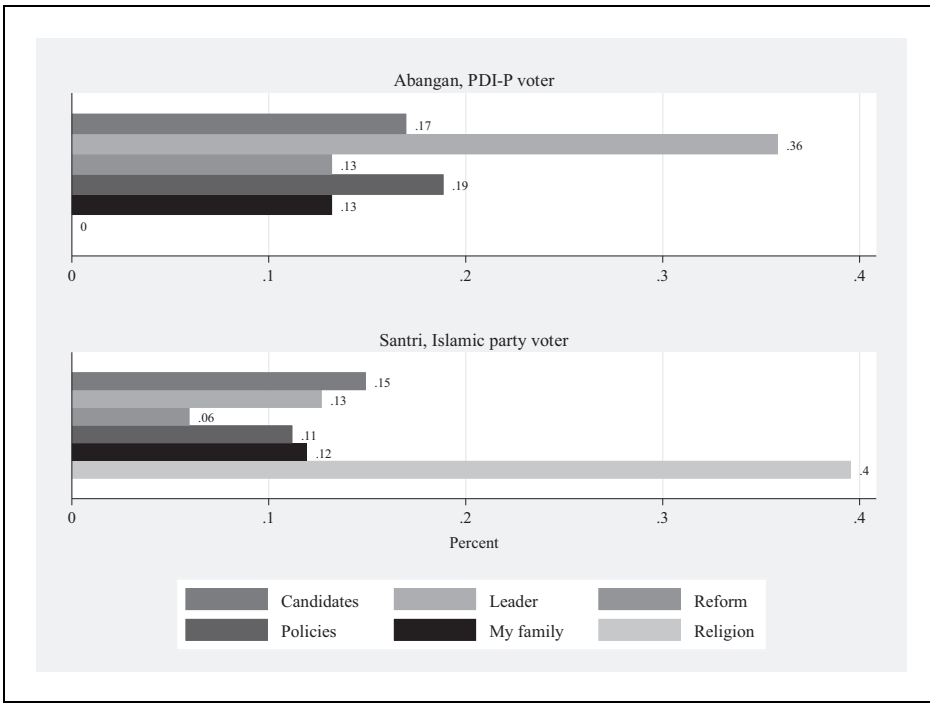

Figure 5. Drivers of Party Choice in Two Groups of Voters.

preferences of *santri* and *priyayi* respondents are clearly different from non-*aliran* voters, in that respondents in either group are much more likely to vote for Islamic parties and less likely to vote for PDI-P than respondents with no *aliran* affiliation. However, the partisan profile of *abangan* voters is virtually identical to that of non-*aliran* respondents. This suggests that the association between *aliran* identity and party choice is asymmetric across party family, being stronger for Islamic than for secularist parties. Perhaps, this asymmetry is related to the increasing electoral competitiveness in Indonesian politics (Tomsa, 2014), which is often attributed to the rise of new parties described as personalistic and non-ideological, such as former President Yudhoyono's Democratic Party, Prabowo Subianto's Gerindra Party, and others. As none of these parties describes itself as an Islamic party, the PDI-P might have been more exposed than Islamic parties to ideological competition from these new actors in Indonesian politics.

Finally, this survey allows us to explore how respondents justify their own party choice by asking them to choose among different reasons why they voted for a certain political party. Figure 5 explores the association between *aliran*, partisan preferences, and drivers of party choice by juxtaposing two types of voters: self-described *abangan* Indonesians who support secularist PDI-P and *santri* Indonesians who vote for an Islamic party. As shown in Figure 4, these two ideal types of voters differ sharply in how they

account for their partisan preferences.[10] While 40 per cent of *santri*/Islamic party voters report choosing their party on religious considerations, literally none of the fifty-three *abangan*/PDI-P voters in the sample does. This suggests that, while there may be various reasons why *santri* Indonesians vote for a specific party, many of them are reluctant to consider voting for a party not easily recognisable as Islamic. The opposite pattern is observed for voting because of the party leader's likeability, which is by far the factor mentioned most often by *abangan*/PDI-P voters (36 per cent), but it is only mentioned by 13 per cent of *santri* voting for Islamic parties. *Abangan*/PDI-P respondents are also more likely than *santri*/Islamic party voters to report that they chose their favourite party because it stands for reform (13 per cent vs. 6 per cent) or because they agree with its policies (19 per cent vs. 11 per cent). *Aliran* identity is therefore closely associated with the process through which Indonesian voters determine what political party to support.

4.3. Ideology

A further question regards the association between *aliran* identities and the ideological dimension introduced in the previous section, namely political Islam. While there is substantial degree of heterogeneity in ideological positions within Indonesian political Islam, *santri* Indonesians have traditionally been more likely to support Islamist understandings of the Indonesian state, while the *abangan* have endorsed more secularist/pluralist views of state–Islam relations. The key implication of this ideological difference is thus that *abangan* respondents should express more secularist attitudes than the *santri*, as measured by the PII introduced above. As for the *priyayi*, their culture is typically described as being strongly influenced by precolonial Hindu and Buddhist culture rather than by Islamic teachings; they should thus be predominantly secularist.

Average scores of the PII provide some empirical support for these hypotheses, but they also show that the differences among *aliran* groups are modest. *Santri* respondents score on average 3.4 on the PII scale (1 to 5, in which higher values denote more Islamist attitudes), which is only slightly higher than the average of 3.24 observed in *abangan* respondents. Surprisingly, the ideological differences between these two groups are fairly small, and the *abangan* appear to be less secularist than respondents with no *aliran* affiliation (average PII score of 3.07). As for the *priyayi*, they emerge as the most secularist group in the sample with an average PII score of 2.96, a puzzling result given their preference for Islamic parties discussed above. These data thus offer only limited support for the hypothesis of a strong association between *aliran* identity and political ideology.

While average PII scores may be a useful starting point to investigate the ideological dimension of *aliran* identities, these aggregate figures may obfuscate important differences in how the various ideological groups are distributed within each *aliran* group. Figure 6 divides voters into three main categories according to their ideological orientation, namely secularists/leaning secularists, centrists, and Islamists/leaning Islamists, and it shows how membership in these three groups is distributed within each *aliran* stream. Of the four groups, the *santri* stand out as the only one in which a majority of respondents (56 per cent) can be classified as Islamist or leaning Islamist, and this is

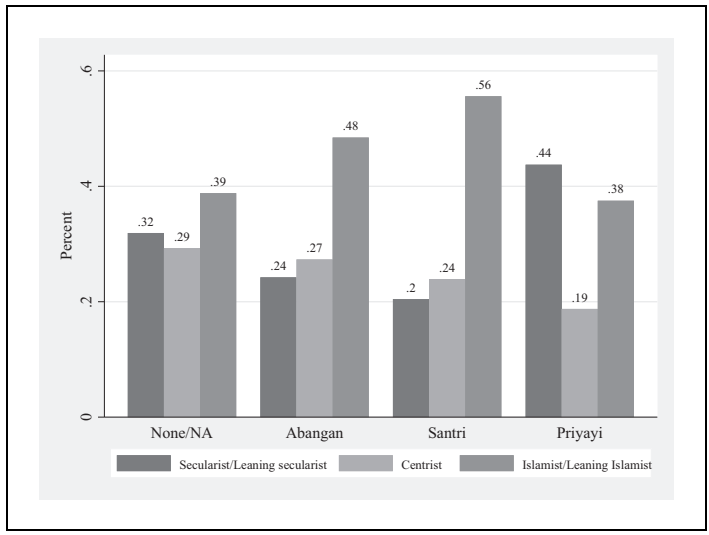

Figure 6. Ideological Profiles in *Aliran* Groups.

consistent with theoretical expectations. However, more surprisingly, the *abangan* group also shows a clear preponderance of Islamists and leaning Islamist respondents in its membership. The *abangan* are thus far from being a bastion of secularist values, as they are substantially more Islamist than voters who do not feel as belonging to any *aliran* group. These findings resonates with the analysis carried out in Pepinsky et al. (2018: 48–49), in which the authors show that *santri* and *abangan* Indonesians exhibit similar levels of religious piety. Finally, the bar charts suggest that secularist views are much more strongly endorsed among the *priyayi* than any other group.

To summarise the findings in this section, survey data suggests that *aliran* identities are still deep-rooted in a large segment of the Indonesian electorate, although this group of voters is mostly confined to the island of Java. I find an association between *aliran* identities and important aspects of political behaviour, such as interest or participation in politics and, most importantly, with party choice. However, the relationship between *aliran* identity and ideology is somewhat looser, and to a certain extent it defies expectations.

These findings suggest that, while a resurgence of historical partisan affiliations may be underway in Indonesian politics, such partisan polarisation may not necessarily be clearly described as being "ideological" (see also Warburton, 2019). In this respect, the Indonesian case resembles other democracies in which intense partisan rivalry may not be associated with clear programmatic distinction. Nevertheless, as the next section shows, to fully understand the role that ideology is playing in voting behaviour in contemporary Indonesia, we need to move beyond the *aliran* framework and allow that political ideology may affect voting behaviour independently of historical partisan affiliations.

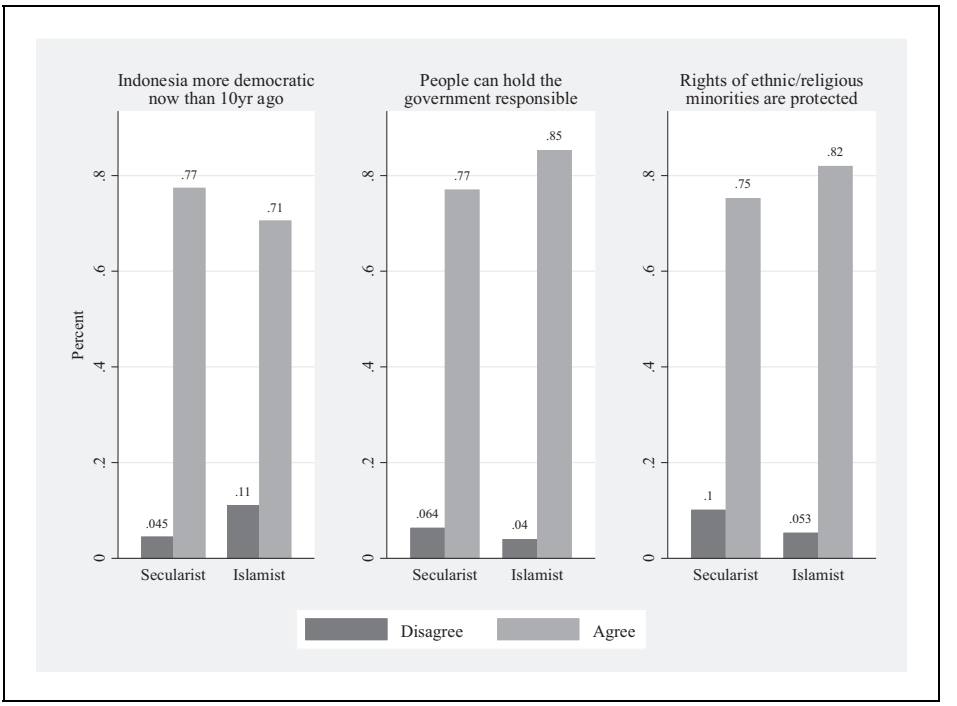

Figure 7. Views of Indonesian Democracy by Ideology Group.

5. Attitudinal Correlates of Political Islam in Indonesia

This section turns to analysing the implications of political Islam, the key dimension of ideological competition in Indonesian politics, for political attitudes and behaviour. I thus shift the focus of the analysis away from *aliran* and Javanese provinces and work with the whole survey sample to address broader questions about the nature and the role of ideology in Indonesian politics.

5.1. Support for and Conception of Democracy

The first question I ask is whether the ideological groups defined in Figure 3 differ in their level of support for and understanding of democracy. To address this question, I start by analysing attitudinal differences between the two groups with the clearest ideological profile among those represented by the bar charts, namely secularist and Islamist respondents. Figure 7 indicates that differences are fairly small between secularist and Islamist respondents' perceptions and evaluations of Indonesian democracy. Islamist respondents are slightly more dissatisfied of developments over the last ten years, as only 71 per cent of them, as opposed to 77 per cent of secularist respondents, agree that Indonesia has become more democratic over the last decade (left panel). However, secularist respondents appear to be

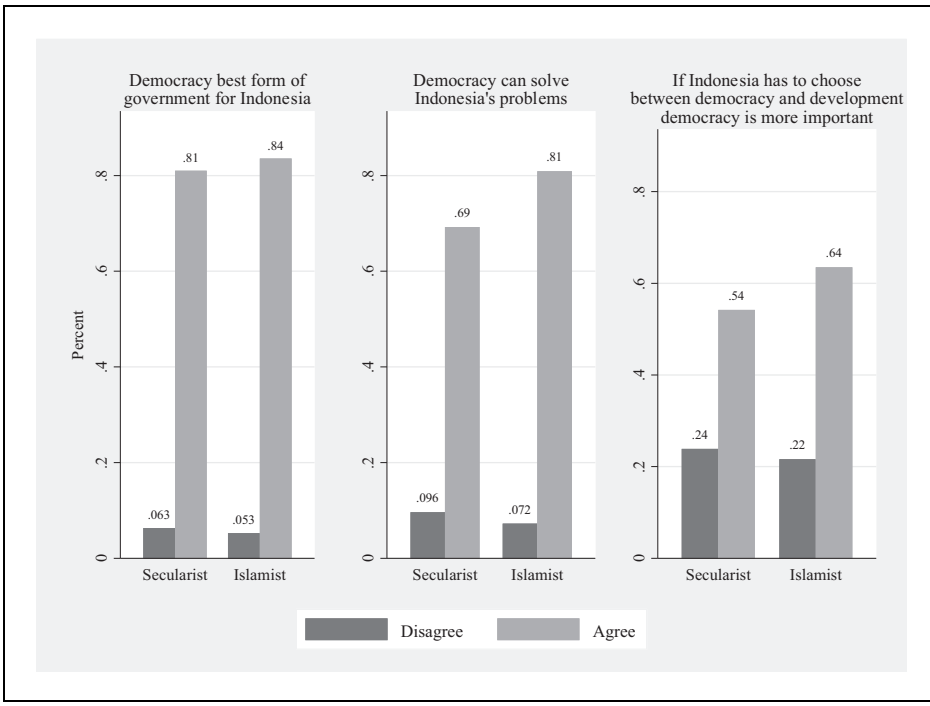

Figure 8. Support for Democracy by Ideology Group.

more aware of the limitations of democracy in Indonesia, as they are more critical when it comes to assessing its record in areas such as accountability and the protection of ethnic and religious minority rights (centre and right panel).

Questions measuring support for democracy reveal somewhat more substantial differences between secularists and Islamists, as displayed in Figure 8. While support for democracy as the best form of government for Indonesia is very high in both groups (left panel), Islamist respondents appear to be more confident in the ability of democracy to solve Indonesia's problems (centre). Secularist respondents also show more scepticism about the importance of democracy in the question with the hypothetical trade-off between democracy and development (right). While 64 per cent of Islamist respondents would favour democracy over development, only 54 per cent of secularists express the same view. In general, therefore, by the various measures provided by this survey, Indonesians who can be described as being Islamists are not any more dissatisfied with democratic rule than secularist respondents, not any less confident about the prospects of democracy as an effective way of government or any less appreciative of the value of democracy.

These results are consistent with the overall high levels of support for democracy often found in survey research. However, while secularists and Islamists do not appear to be very different in their satisfaction with and support for democracy, the ideological

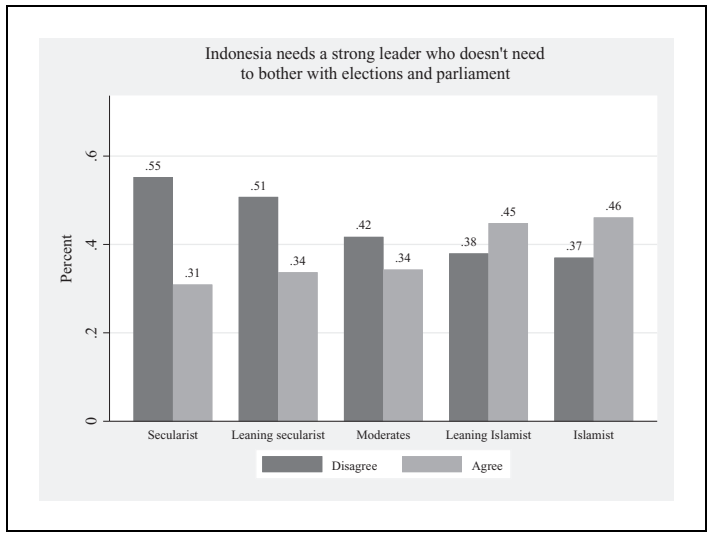

Figure 9. Support for a Strong Leader by Ideology Group.

cleavage between secularism and Islamism may be associated with different conceptions of what it means to be a "democracy." For one, Islamist may be less likely to endorse pluralist understandings of democracy, which has implications for their attitudes towards ethnic and religious minorities and views of how their rights should be protected in a democratic political system.

Furthermore, support for democracy should not be equated with support for the system of constitutional checks and balances typical of established liberal democracies. Consider for example a question often asked in comparative survey research about support for a strong leader who doesn't need to bother with the parliament and always wins elections. Agreement with this statement varies substantially across ideological groups, as shown in Figure 9. While support for such an unaccountable strong leader is only at 31 per cent among secularists, it rises steadily in more Islamist groups, peaking at 46 per cent among Islamists. Islamist respondents are thus substantially more likely to support an authoritarian political leadership than secularist respondents, according to the correlation displayed below. This suggests that the ideological divide over the role of Islam in politics, while not associated with nominal support for democracy, has important implications for the kind of democracy that is perceived as being worthy of support. Specifically, a pluralist conception of democracy based on checks and balances and horizontal accountability is more likely to be supported by secularist than by Islamist respondents.

5.2. The Economy

Observers of Indonesian politics have debated as to whether, and to what extent, economic factors account for the resurgence of Islamist politics in this country (Hadiz,

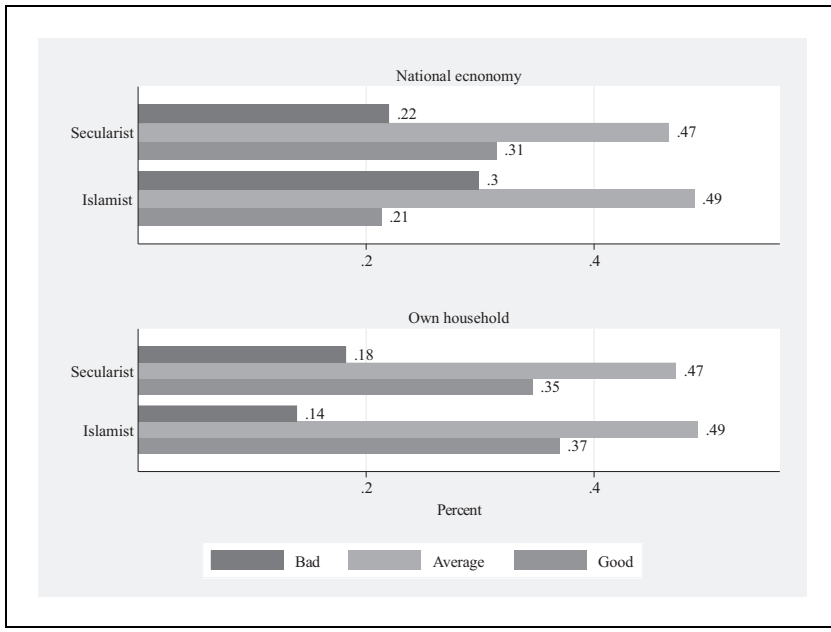

Figure 10. Evaluation of Economic Conditions by Ideology Group.

2014). Analyses of the 2017 campaign for the gubernatorial elections in Jakarta, for example, offer a suitable illustration of this discussion. While some attribute the success of anti-incumbent mobilisation to a skilful manipulation of religious identity and anti-Chinese sentiments (Warburton and Gammon, 2017), others emphasise the role of economic grievances (Wilson, 2017). Is it indeed the case that political Islam is systematically associated, in the minds of the Indonesian public, with economic grievances and a more critical appraisal of economic conditions?

In the top panel of Figure 10, evaluations of macroeconomic performance are broken down by ideological group. The chart shows that Islamist respondents are overall more critical in their evaluations: while positive evaluations prevail among secularists (31 per cent describe the economy as "good or "very good," as opposed to 22 per cent as "bad" or "very bad"), negative assessments prevail among Islamists by roughly the same proportions. Respondents who score higher values in the PII are thus less happy with the condition of the Indonesian economy. However, the bottom panel shows that this dissatisfaction does not depend on the economic condition of respondents' households, as Islamists and secularists do not differ much in their evaluation of the current condition of their households (in fact, Islamist respondents are slightly more optimistic). It is thus important to underscore that, while differences in perceptions of the national economy between secularist and Islamist respondents are substantial, such divergencies are not rooted in the respondents' experience of their own economic situation.

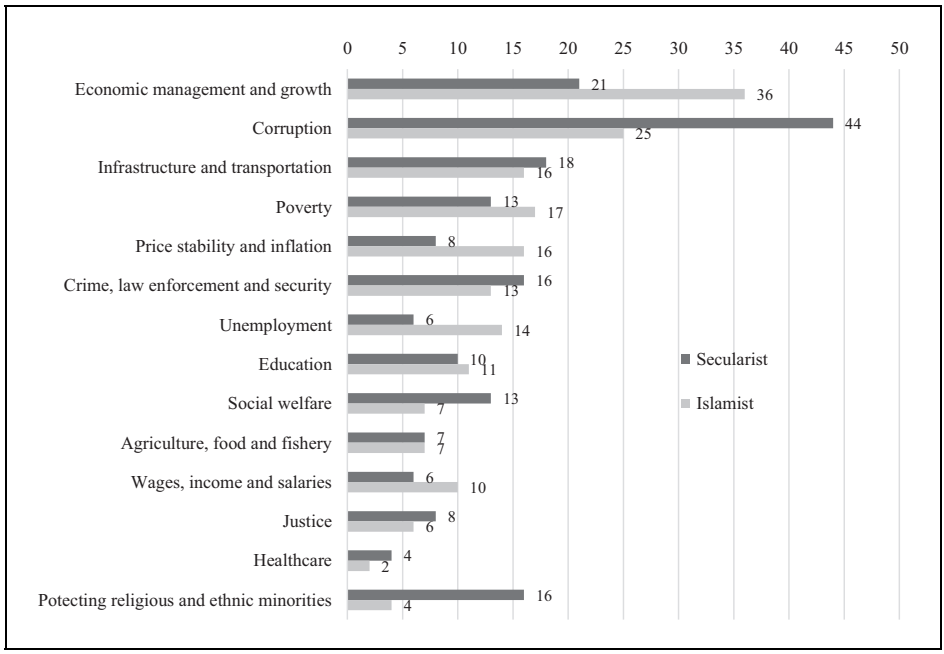

Figure 11. Policy Priorities by Ideology Group.

The data displayed in Figure 10 suggest that Islamist respondents might be more concerned about the economy and more likely to perceive issues related to economy policy as a policy priority. As shown in the bar charts in Figure 11, perceptions of what issues should constitute a priority do indeed vary substantially between secularist and Islamist respondents.[11] Overall, the patterns below indicate that the salience of economic issues is clearly higher among Islamists than secularists. Islamic respondents are substantially more likely to mention economic management and growth (+15 per cent); price stability and inflation (+8 per cent); unemployment (+8 per cent); and wages, income, and salaries (+4); and poverty (+4 per cent) as "most important issues." Differences between the two groups are also stark when it comes to perceptions of corruption, which is by far the number one priority among secularists (it is mentioned by 44 per cent of respondents, as opposed to only 25 per cent of Islamists). Finally, and not surprisingly, the protection of the right of ethnic and religious minorities is a more salient issue for secularist Indonesians than it is for individuals who favour a more important role for Islam in public affairs.

As respondents of Islamist leanings appear to perceive poverty alleviation as a more salient political issue, we may hypothesise that they favour a more active role for government in reducing inequality with policies aimed at improving the economic conditions of the most vulnerable sectors of the population. Figure 12 shows cross-tabulation between ideological groups and two variables that measure preferences

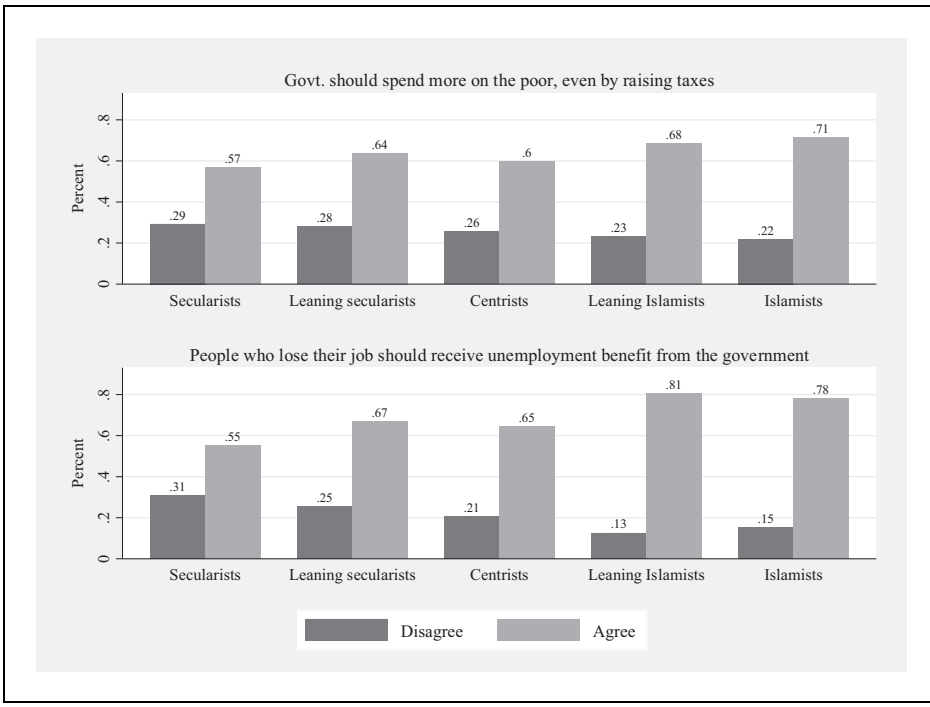

Figure 12. Support for Economic Redistribution by Ideology Group.

over economic redistribution and social insurance. For the first question, reported in the top panel, respondents are asked whether they agree with the statement "The government should spend more to help the poor, even if it may require raising taxes." In the second (bottom panel), the statement is that the government should provide unemployment benefits to those who lose their job. As shown in the bar charts, support for both statements increases fairly regularly as we move from more secularist to more Islamist ideological groups. The PII thus appears to be associated with economy policy preferences. The stronger the support for Islam in politics, the higher the support for unemployment insurance and economic distribution through fiscal policy.

The data discussed here offer some intriguing insights on the relationship between political Islam and public attitudes over the economy and economic policy. While the differences across ideology groups in assessments of macroeconomic performance may not originate from actual economic inequalities, preferences over political Islam are strongly associated with policy priorities and economic policy preferences.

5.3. Support for Decentralisation

Political Islam and regional autonomy have been closely intertwined in Indonesia, a country in which centre–periphery relations have been a crucial issue for state

formation.[12] To divide and rule the Indonesian population and its leadership, the Dutch created a federalist state in Indonesia in the mid-1940s. This initiative was strongly opposed by Indonesian nationalists, who came to see support for federalism as collaboration with the colonial masters and advocated instead a unitary vision of the new Indonesian state (Feith, 1962: 70–71). This important critical juncture created a strong association between nationalist–secularist ideology and preference over centralised governance.

At the opposite end of the ideological spectrum, political Islam has often been identified as supporting, sometimes through violent means, a larger role for regions in Indonesian government. Shortly after decolonisation, a first important challenge to the Indonesian state was the secessionist Darul Islam insurgency, in which guerrillas, mostly located in the regions of West Java, Aceh, and South Sulawesi, proclaimed an independent Islamic state within Indonesian territory. In the late 1950s, the Islamic party Masyumi was disbanded along with other regional parties for its involvement in regional rebellions in Sumatra and Sulawesi (Nordholt, 2005: 43–44).

Is this deep-rooted connection between political Islam and autonomist demands still present in contemporary Indonesia? To measure support for regional autonomy, the survey questionnaire asked for opinions on whether "Allowing different laws in response to different local needs and conditions" is a desirable feature in a political system. Respondents are described as supportive of regional autonomy if they agree or strongly agree with this statement, and overall 57 per cent of the sample do. Data analysis suggest that indeed support for regional autonomy is positively correlated with each and every item of the PII scale reported in Table 1. For example, the share supporting regional autonomy drops from 63 per cent in respondents who endorse the statement "The government should prioritize Islam over other religions" to 51 per cent in those who do not; support for decentralisation among proponents of Sharia law (item 4) is 67 per cent, but only 51 per cent in those who oppose it; and so forth. Figure 13 displays variation of support for decentralisation over six items from Table 1, and it suggests a clear pattern of variation: regardless of the specific indicator used, supporters of political Islam are systematically more likely to support regional autonomy than secularist respondents.[13]

A possible implication of this finding is that support for regional autonomy may be higher among voters of Islamic political parties. Given their generally weak position in national politics, Islamic parties may have been advocating increased regional autonomy to advance their political agenda in the more favourable arena of local politics. In turn, their supporters may have developed more positive attitudes over decentralisation. Survey data, however, suggest that this is not the case. Voters of secular–nationalist PDI-P are as likely (59 per cent) to support decentralisation as voters of Islamist PKS (60 per cent) or non-ideological Golkar (59 per cent).

5.4. Political Behaviour

These survey data also allow us to investigate the link between political Islam and political behaviour. To ascertain whether this ideological dimension has implications for how Indonesians evaluate politicians and vote, I focus on two outcomes, namely

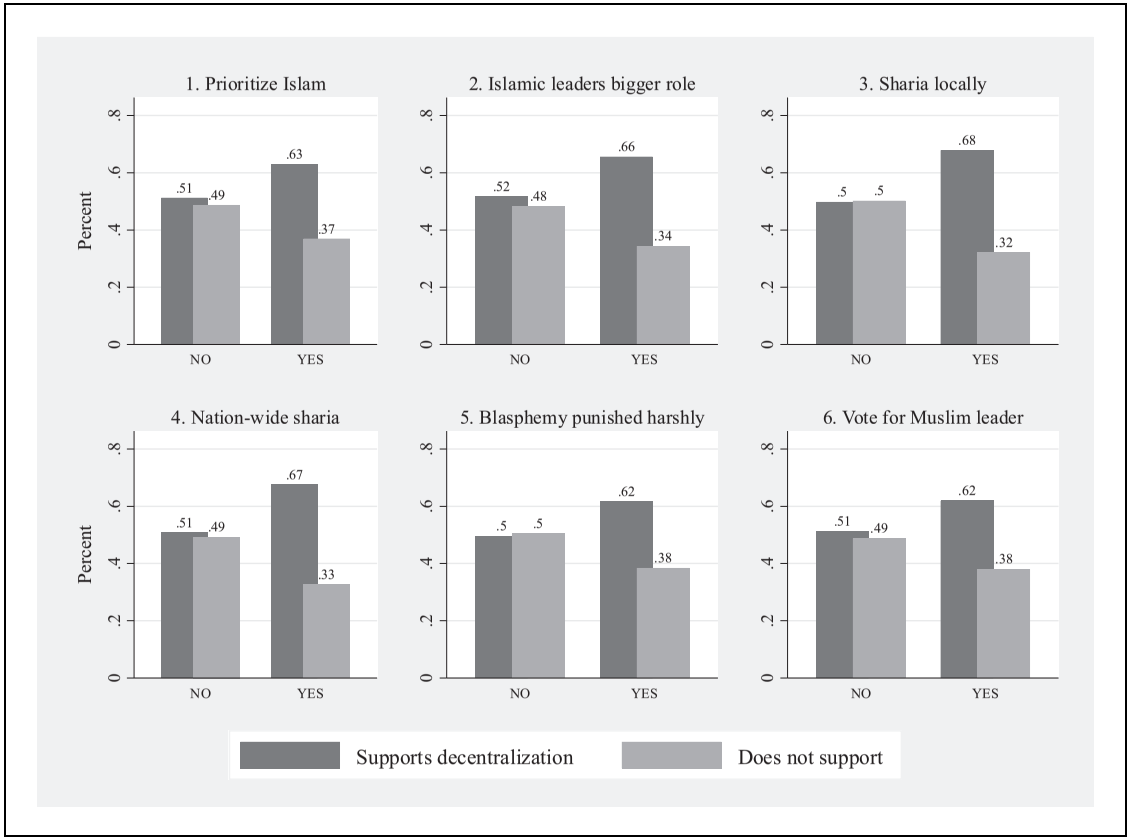

Figure 13. Support for Decentralisation by Political Islam.

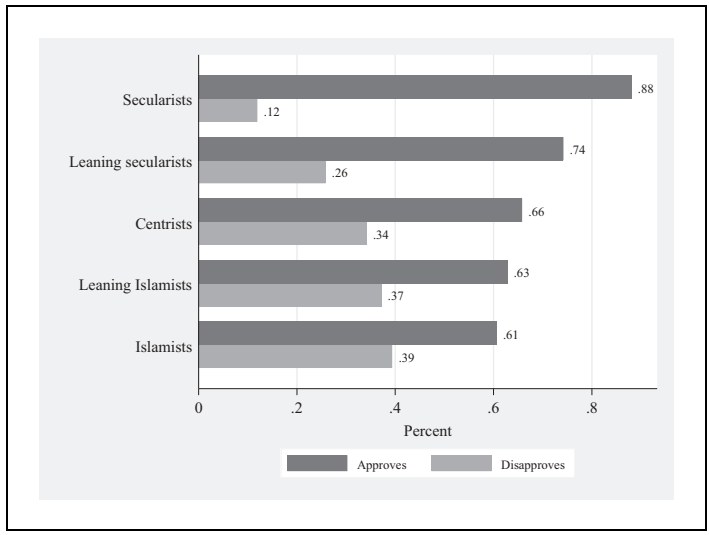

Figure 14. Approval of President Joko Widodo by Ideological Group.

approval of Joko "Jokowi" Widodo's performance as President of the Republic and party choice. As highlighted by several observers of Indonesian politics, radical Islam has mounted a forceful challenge to Jokowi's incumbency since the mass demonstrations of late 2016 in Jakarta. While job approval for the president was quite high at 68 per cent when the survey was taken, we can thus expect opposition to the president to be concentrated at the Islamist end of the ideological spectrum.

The approval rates displayed in Figure 14 corroborate this expectation. While supporters of Jokowi outnumber his opponents in every ideological group, approval of the president declines steadily as we move from secularist to Islamist respondents, decreasing from 88 per cent to 61 per cent . The empirical association between ideology and evaluations of the incumbent president is thus regular and strong. While approval for incumbent politicians may not always translate in support for them at the polls, these data suggest that preferences over the role of Islam in politics may shape evaluations of incumbent politicians as well of the perceptions of macroeconomic performance analysed in the previous section. This, in turn, may have important implications for voting behaviour.

As for political parties, the data set allows us to investigate associations between the PII and party choice. Specifically, we may hypothesise that voters of parties with a more Islamist ideological profile score substantially higher PII scores than voters of secularist parties. Defining what parties should be categorised as more or less secularist/Islamist in the context of Indonesian politics, however, is not straightforward. First, Indonesian political parties, including Islamic parties, are often described as lacking internal discipline and ideological cohesion, and ascribing an ideological profile to them may therefore be problematic (Buehler, 2009). Second, ideological moderation and

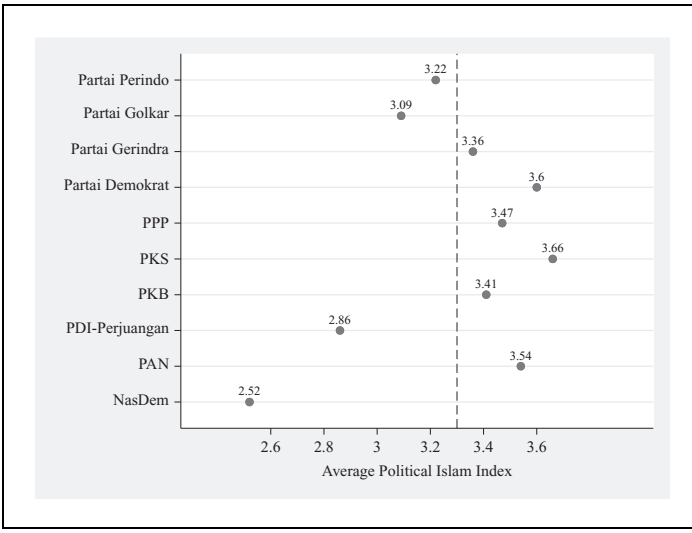

Figure 15. Political Islam and Party Choice.

competition for centrist voters are a key feature of the Indonesian party system (Mietzner, 2008). Islamic parties have abandoned their more extreme positions (Hamayotsu, 2011), and nominally secularist parties such as Golkar, Demokrat, and Gerindra have been trying to strengthen their Islamic credentials to appeal to religious constituencies (Tanuwidjaja, 2010; Tomsa, 2008). Nevertheless, Aspinall et al. (2018) find that Indonesian political parties *are* different in their positions on political Islam. PDI-P and NasDem are the most secularist in their ideological orientation, Islam-based parties (PKS, PKB, PPP and PAN) advocate a larger role for Islam in politics, and the remaining parties (Demokrat, Gerindra, Golkar, Hanura) occupy an intermediate position.

Are party voters as clearly differentiated in their attitudes over state–Islam relations? Figure 15 plots average PII scores for voters of the main Indonesian political parties according to the survey, and it shows some important differences between group of voters as defined by their party preference. NasDem voters record an average score of 2.52, which makes them by far the most "secularist" group of voters according to this measure. PDI-P supporters score 2.86 on average, and Golkar and recently established Partai Perindo also appear with PII scores below the sample median of 2.29 (vertical dashed line). At the opposite end of the spectrum, voters of PKS are the most Islamist in the sample, closely followed by Partai Demorkat voters and supporters of the other three Islam-based parties. Finally, Gerindra supporters are the group that, on average, is more closely aligned with the median position in the ideological space measured by the PII.

These results are consistent with expectations in that they show PDI-P and NasDem voters as being substantially more secularist, in general, than supporters of Islamic parties. Furthermore, they show a high degree of heterogeneity across voters of the

various parties that constitute President Jokowi's government coalition, as expected given their different ideological profiles. However, Figure 15 also shows some unexpected patterns, especially in some important differences among parties we usually think of as being non-ideological. While Golkar voters are more secularist than the overall sample average, supporters of former president SBY's Partai Demokrat are virtually as Islamist as voters of PKS, the party that is often considered to be the most Islamist among Indonesian political parties. The striking case of Partai Demokrat suggests that there may be a disconnect between official party communication casting this party as pluralist and secularist and how the party is perceived by its electorate, as party supporters appear to be substantially more Islamist than expected.

Further research may explore with multivariate regression analysis the extent to which political Islam is a driver of party choice as compared with other factors such as preferences over party leaders or more materialistic considerations. Yet Figure 15 indicates substantial variation in preferences over political Islam across voters of different political parties. While the picture is more complicated than suggested by a simple dichotomy between secularist and Islamic parties, these findings suggest that, to a certain degree, ideology is associated with party choice in the behaviour of Indonesian voters.

To conclude, data analysis suggests important and systematic attitudinal differences between secularist and Islamist Indonesians. Overall, Islamists express very high levels of support for democracy, but they are much more likely than secularist Indonesians to endorse a strong leadership unconstrained by checks and balances. With regard to the economy, Islamist Indonesians are more critical in their assessment of macroeconomic performance, they perceive a higher salience of economic issues when compared with secularist respondents, and they are more supportive of redistributive policies. Ideological differences over political Islam also have reverberations for preferences over decentralisation: in accordance with expectations derived from Indonesian history, support for regional autonomy is substantially higher among Indonesians who favour a larger role for Islam in political life. Finally, I find a link between views of political Islam and voting behaviour, as the PII is strongly associated with approval of President Joko Widodo.

6. Conclusions

Indonesia is often portrayed as a flawed democracy because relations between citizens and politicians tend to be based on patronage and clientelism rather than programmatic competition. In contrast with advanced democracies, where politics is typically structured around an identifiable left–right axis, political parties in Indonesia do not offer clearly articulated and differentiated policy alternatives to voters, and most existing research suggests that ideology is a rather marginal factor in voting behaviour.

In light of the latest political developments and findings emerging from recent academic research on Indonesia, this (quasi) consensus about the nature of Indonesian politics may be shifting. This article aims to contribute to this debate by drawing the attention of scholars of Indonesian politics on the role of ideology in this diverse political system. In taking political ideology seriously, I have focused on two main dimensions,

namely preferences over the role of Islam in public life and self-reported identity rooted in historical political–ideological affiliations known as *aliran*. I did not find a strong association between the two, but the analysis performed here indicates political Islam is associated with important attitudinal and behavioural outcomes, although in different ways that not always conform with theoretical expectations.

The findings invite two sets of reflections about the role of political Islam in contemporary Indonesian politics. The first concerns the relevance of ideology in structuring public attitudes and driving voting behaviour. The data analysed here suggest that the ideological divide between secularism and Islamism resonates with the Indonesian public. Very few people lack an opinion on the issue of state–Islam relations, and I have documented substantial variation in individual-level attitudes, which suggests that this ideological dimension is a consolidated and readily available heuristics in the minds of many Indonesians.

Furthermore, I have identified a link between political Islam and policy preferences in two crucial policy domains, namely economy policy and decentralisation. This is a consequential finding because it shows that, for many Indonesian voters, political Islam is associated with policy positions and issue salience. Yet the relationship between ideology and political behaviour is complex. While political Islam is strongly associated with evaluations of president Jokowi, the link with party choice is less clear. And indeed, Indonesian political parties have yet to formulate coherent programmatic platform linking this religious cleavage with policy positions in other domains. For example, we have yet to observe Islamic parties as coherently and consistently advocating for a higher degree of economic redistribution and more decentralised governance. Yet perhaps this analysis of public opinion can offer a glimpse of how political competition in Indonesia could become more structured and programmatic.

Second, the findings have implications for the debate on the conservative turn in Indonesian Islam and the rise of Islamism as a challenge to liberal democracy in Indonesia. These survey data suggest that democratic institutions are perceived as legitimate by Islamists as they are by secularist Indonesians. If anything, support for democracy in some indicators is higher among Islamists, a finding that is perhaps related to the legacy of marginalisation faced by political Islam during the authoritarian New Order. However, supporters of a larger role for Islam in politics are more likely to endorse the need of a strong leadership unfettered by the checks and balances of liberal democracies. This indicates that the kind of democracy so strongly supported by Islamist Indonesians may be quite different from a liberal and secular political system with a clear separation of powers and equality for all before the law. In this respect, challenges for the consolidation of liberal democracy in Indonesia may intensify as hard-line Islamic groups become more influential in Indonesian politics.

As for the findings on *aliran*, it is important to emphasise that this study is insufficient to render the complexity of partisan identities and their implications for political behaviour and that the analysis was based for the most part on data from Javanese regions. Further research is needed to investigate how ordinary citizens and political leaders have engaged with and perpetuated *aliran* identities and how their profile has changed over time. However, the evidence indicates that *aliran* identities may still

matter. For some segments of the Indonesian electorate, partisan allegiances are not exclusively a matter of patronage politics or supporting "electable" leaders. Rather, they go back to deep-seated social and cultural cleavages that are still meaningful today, despite decades of authoritarian repression and the apparent marginality of ideology in contemporary Indonesian politics. The 2019 presidential elections suggest that partisan polarisation may be consolidating rather than eroding. Whether this is the beginning of a process through which Indonesia will transition towards more programmatic politics, however, remains to be seen.

Acknowledgement

The author is grateful to ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute for funding data collection and two anonymous reviewers for useful comments.

Declaration of conflicting interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding

The author(s) disclosed receipt of the following financial support for the research, authorship and/or publication of this article: Author received funding from ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute for this project.

Notes

1. Providing and exhaustive discussion of the concept of *aliran* or the rich literature on the subject is beyond the scope of this article. For additional references on Islam and politics in Indonesia, see Fealy and White (2008), Menchik (2016), Pepinsky et al. (2018), Ricklefs (2012), and Woodward (2010).
2. This sampling procedure is designed to guarantee a high degree of representativeness and geographical coverage. Each Indonesian province is represented in the survey sample with at least one village. In total, 21 per cent of respondents were interviewed in Sumatra, 56.2 per cent in Java, 6.2 per cent in Kalimantan, 8 per cent in Sulawesi, 3.1 per cent in Maluku-Papua, and 5.6 per cent in Bali-Nusa Tenggara.
3. This leaves us with 312 respondents who do not identify with any *aliran* stream (34 per cent), 161 *abangan* (18 per cent), 405 *santri* (44.5 per cent), and 32 *priyayi* (3.5 per cent). As the number of sampled villages in each province is proportional to the province's population, most of these respondents were interviewed in the provinces of West Java, Central Java, and East Java.
4. In this conceptualisation of political Islam, ideology over state–Islam relations is analytically distinct from religious piety. See also Pepinsky at al. (2018: 29–30).
5. For the purposes of Table 1, I recode the answers into a simpler scale in which respondents may agree (values 4 or 5 in the original scale), disagree (values 1 or 2), or neither agree nor disagree (3) with each item.
6. The 2017 elections in Jakarta featured the unprecedented case of a Christian Chinese candidate, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, running for governor. The heated electoral campaign focused on identity issues, especially religion. It included mass demonstrations organised by radical Islamists, a criminal indictment on blasphemy charges against Purnama, and a public debate on whether Muslim voters should be allowed to support non-Muslim political candidates.

7. To group respondents in various ideological categories and generate Figure 3, I simply divide the range of the scale into five segments of equal size.
8. This means that only 41 Muslim respondents in the sample qualify as "secularist," while more than four times as much, or 165 respondents, fall into the "Islamist" category.
9. These figures, however, suffer from substantial overreporting (plausibly due to social desirability bias) that could obfuscate the differences across the two groups.
10. Respondents were asked to mention up to three reasons to justify their party vote from a randomised list of options including "the party has better candidates," "I like the party's leader," "the party supports reform," "I agree with the party's policies," "the party is supported by many in my family," "the party represents my religion," and a few others. The bars in Figure 15 represent the share of voters who mentioned a given factor in at least one of their three answers.
11. Respondents were allowed to mention up to three "most important" issues in their answers.
12. This section is based on Fossati (2017).
13. A similar relationship is observed by disaggregating support for decentralisation over religious groups: regional autonomy is supported by 59 per cent of Indonesian Muslims, but only by 47 per cent of Indonesians belonging to a religious minority.

References

Ambardi K (2008) *The making of the Indonesian multiparty system: a cartelized party system and its origin*. Doctor of Philosophy. Columbus, OH: Ohio State University. Available at: http://rave.ohiolink.edu/etdc/view?acc_num=osu1211901025.

Aspinall E (2019) Indonesia's election and the return of ideological competition. *New Mandala*, 22 April.

Aspinall E and Berenschot W (2019) *Democracy for Sale: Elections, Clientelism, and the State in Indonesia*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Aspinall E, Fossati D, Muhtadi B, et al. (2018) Mapping the Indonesian political spectrum. *New Mandala*, 24 April.

Buehler M (2009) Islam and democracy in Indonesia. *Insight Turkey* 11(4): 51.

Fealy G and White S (2008) *Expressing Islam: Religious Life and Politics in Indonesia*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.

Feith H (1962) *The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Fossati D (2017) Support for decentralisation and political Islam go together in Indonesia. *ISEAS Perspective* (69): 1–10.

Fossati D (2019) Electoral reform and partisan dealignment in Indonesia. *International Political Science Review*. Epub ahead of print 15 April, 2019. DOI: 10.1177/0192512119826389.

Fossati D, Muhtadi B and Warburton E (2019) Follow the leader: personalities, policy and partisanship in Indonesia. *New Mandala*, 15 July.

Fossati D, Yew-Foong H and Siwage DN (2017) *The Indonesia National Survey Project: Economy, society and politics*. Singapore: ISEAS.

Geertz C (1960) *The Religion of Java*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Hadiz VR (2014) A new Islamic populism and the contradictions of development. *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 44(1): 125–143.

Hamayotsu K (2011) The end of political Islam? A comparative analysis of religious parties in the Muslim democracy of Indonesia. *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs* 30(3): 133–159.

Iqtidar H (2011) *Secularizing Islamists?* Vol. 16. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

King DY (2003) *Half-Hearted Reform: Electoral Institutions and the Struggle for Democracy in Indonesia*. Santa Barbara: Greenwood Publishing Group.
Liow JCY (2009) *Piety and Politics: Islamism in Contemporary Malaysia*. Cary: OUP USA.
Menchik J (2016) *Islam and Democracy in Indonesia: Tolerance without Liberalism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Mietzner M (2008) Comparing Indonesia's party systems of the 1950s and the post-Suharto era: from centrifugal to centripetal inter-party competition. *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 39(3): 431–453.
Mietzner M (2013) *Money, Power, and Ideology: Political parties in Post-Authoritarian Indonesia*. Singapore: NUS Press.
Mietzner M and Muhtadi B (2018) Explaining the 2016 Islamist mobilisation in Indonesia: religious intolerance, militant groups and the politics of accommodation. *Asian Studies Review* 42(3): 479–497.
Mujani S and Liddle RW (2010) Personalities, parties, and voters. *Journal of Democracy* 21(2): 35–49.
Nordholt HS (2005) Decentralisation in Indonesia: Less state, more democracy? In: Harriss J, Stokke K and Törnquist O (eds) *Politicising Democracy*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 29–50.
Pepinsky TB, Liddle RW and Mujani S (2018) *Piety and Public Opinion: Understanding Indonesian Islam*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Riaz A and Fair CC (2010) *Political Islam and Governance in Bangladesh*. Abingdon: Routledge.
Ricklefs MC (2012) *Islamisation and Its Opponents in Java: A political, Social, Cultural and Religious History, c. 1930 to the Present*. Singapore: NUS Press Singapore.
Slater D (2004) Indonesia's accountability trap: party cartels and presidential power after democratic transition. *Indonesia* (78): 61–92.
Tanuwidjaja S (2010) Political Islam and Islamic parties in Indonesia: critically assessing the evidence of Islam's political decline. *Contemporary Southeast Asia: A Journal of International and Strategic Affairs* 32(1): 29–49.
Tomsa D (2008) *Party Politics and Democratization in Indonesia: Golkar in the Post-Suharto era*. New York: Routledge.
Tomsa D (2014) Party system fragmentation in Indonesia: the subnational dimension. *Journal of East Asian Studies* 14(2): 249.
Ufen A (2008) From "aliran" to dealignment: political parties in post-Suharto Indonesia. *South East Asia Research* 16(1): 5–41.
Warburton E (2019) Polarisation in Indonesia: what if perception is reality? *New Mandala*, 16 April.
Warburton E and Gammon L (2017) Class dismissed? Economic fairness and identity politics in Indonesia. *New Mandala*, 5 May.
Wilson I (2017) Jakarta: inequality and the poverty of elite pluralism. *New Mandala*, 19.
Woodward M (2010) *Java, Indonesia and Islam*, Vol. 3. Berlin: Springer Science & Business Media.

Author biography

Diego Fossati studies voting behaviour, accountability and representation, especially in the context of Indonesia and other low and middle-income countries. His work has been published in leading international peer-reviewed journals such as *World Development*, *European Journal of Political Research* and *Review of International Political Economy*.